

*By now everyone has probably heard about going green and being more sustainable, but just what does that mean? We all want to be good stewards of the natural resources we have and nobody likes high utility and fuel bills. So the question remains, how do I go green without spending a lot of green?*

*Being green isn't a new concept. It merely means to make environmentally friendly choices. And it can mean taking baby steps where we gradually replace a few things we do on a regular basis with behaviors that will either be helpful, or at least not harmful, to the planet.*

*There are a myriad of ways we can practice a green lifestyle. Happily, most involve very little effort and even less money. Here are a few suggestions for how to make your life more green without dramatically changing the way you live. Most of these ideas can be accomplished with little or no impact to your monthly budget:*



- 1. START A RECYCLING PROGRAM AT HOME OR AT WORK:** paper, plastic, cardboard, glass and aluminum cans are examples of items that can be recycled and re-used. By recycling these items, we can reduce the amount of energy and virgin materials used to make new products. Here in Lewiston, you can receive a blue recycling bin by calling the City at 746-3671 or Sunshine Disposal & Recycling at 743-4075.
- 2. CONSERVE ENERGY AROUND THE HOUSE:** replace burned out light bulbs with Compact Fluorescent Bulbs (They use 1/3 the energy and last 10 times longer). Change or clean the filters in your furnace and refrigerator. Re-caulk window and door openings. Turn off lights, TVs and radios when you're not in the room. Unplug electronics and small appliances when they're not being used. Turn the thermostat down a couple of degrees at bedtime. Use a clothes line to dry clothes when the weather is nice.
- 3. BECOME AN EFFICIENT DRIVER:** think of combining multiple errands into one trip. Keeping your vehicle maintained will optimize fuel economy. Start a carpool for work and school trips. Ride a bike when the weather is nice instead of driving.
- 4. CONSERVE WATER:** run your clothes washer and dishwasher only when they are full. Water the lawn in the early morning hours when temperatures are cooler. When

remodeling your home, replace toilets and shower heads with low flow models. Fix leaky faucets. Landscape your yard with native plantings that survive on local rainfall.

5. **DONATE USED CLOTHING, FURNITURE & HOUSEHOLD ITEMS TO CHARITY FOR RE-USE.**
6. **VOLUNTEER AT COMMUNITY EVENTS:** events like Earth Day promote a green lifestyle.
7. **BORROW INSTEAD OF BUYING:** check out books and movies from the library. Get to know your neighbors and share power tools and appliances.
8. **TALK TO YOUR FAMILY & FRIENDS:** about what they can do to live a greener lifestyle.
9. **CONTACT YOUR LOCAL UTILITY FOR MORE WAYS TO GO GREEN:** most offer incentives and rebates to help you conserve.
10. **IF YOU'RE THINKING OF BUILDING A NEW HOME:** contact a local architect, contractor or building supply center for ways to go green. Sustainable building techniques can be used that don't cost any more than conventional construction practices.

*These are just a few simple ways you can begin to live a more green lifestyle without dramatically altering your monthly budget. In fact, some of these ideas even save you money. There are many excellent books and websites that provide even more information on going green. By taking gradual steps towards a greener lifestyle, we'll help to provide a healthier planet for generations to come!*

*This newsletter is provided by RGU Architecture & Planning, a full-service firm dedicated to sustainable architecture. Additional information may be obtained through our website at [www.rguarchitecture.net](http://www.rguarchitecture.net) or by phone at 208.743.1662.*

